



# SUNDAY 10 MAY 2026

## DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

The Parishes of: Bishop Auckland || Newton Aycliffe & Shildon || Willington  
Crook, Tow Law & Wolsingham || Tudhoe || Coundon, Ferryhill & Windlestone

### ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (A) - John 14: 115-21

You know the feeling (I hope) of not seeing a mate for years and connecting again, picking up where you left off as if it were yesterday. It's good and can be a real joy.

Being close doesn't require sitting next to someone or being in the same room, the same country, or even being on the same side of the costly experience we call death. Physical closeness matters, of course - being able to see, to hold and to join in conversation or activity with those dear to us, are what often form the very makings of becoming close. Relationships that have led to marriage, to expeditions, to discoveries of many kinds, have begun with being pen pals - nowadays maybe starting as internet chat. Deepening and expressing the bonds between individuals create their own stories and the variety is fascinating and the discoveries unforeseeable.

In our Gospel for today's Mass, Jesus speaks of the most unique and original bond there is. It's the union we have with him and with the Father, and Holy Spirit. It's beyond sight and beyond the senses we usually use to measure things - but our God shares his life with us!

There is no relationship greater than the three persons in one God. Theology calls it a dance! - a communion of life that is the source of all else. Whole libraries have been written on the subject and struggled to express it as well as possible. Our own stories of being close to others are a help, but can't adequately capture what our Gospel Jesus is sharing with us. The language is amazing - "I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you" and the gift of the Spirit that holds us describes the delight and extravagance of a God who doesn't want to be separated from us, nor us to be separated from him. God lives in us. If you will, sit quiet and get a kick out of enjoying his company.

Jesus tells stories of a lost sheep, a lost coin and lost (prodigal) son. His pattern is about finding, freeing and keeping us, wanting and believing that no one should be lost. We belong in his hands, being wrapped in his love. Our side of the relationship urges more reflection. Jesus gave his life for us to be with him. The Father who sent him to us, and the Spirit they give that binds us into their forgiving love is also the voltage that brings out our best, our love and concern for others, our work for the poor and the enduring bond with those who have gone before us.

The end of the story is about reunion. Of course it is. Put the kettle on, sit with Jesus' words - and smile.



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#### Pope Leo on the link between love of God and of the poor

Jesus' teaching on the primacy of love for God is clearly complemented by his insistence that one cannot love God without extending one's love to the poor. Love for our neighbour is tangible proof of the authenticity of our love for God, as the Apostle John attests: "No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us... God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them" (1 John 4: 12, 16). The two loves are distinct yet inseparable. Even in cases where there is no explicit reference to God, the Lord himself teaches that every act of love for one's neighbour is in some way a reflection of divine charity: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matthew 25: 40).

For this reason, works of mercy are recommended as a sign of the authenticity of worship, which, while giving praise to God, has the task of opening us to the transformation that the Spirit can bring about in us, so that we may all become an image of Christ and his mercy towards the weakest. In this sense, our relationship with the Lord, expressed in worship, also aims to free us from the risk of living our relationship according to a logic of calculation and self-interest. We are instead open to the gratuitousness that surrounds those who love one another and, therefore, share everything in common. In this regard, Jesus advises "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you" (Luke 14: 12-14).

Dilexi Te paras 26 and 27